

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1.-11. (canceled)

12. (currently amended) A dilatation system for dilating an existing tissue passage in a body, comprising:

a dilatation pin having a distal end and a diameter which increases proximally from said distal end; and

a tubular guide sleeve having a length, a thickness and an inside diameter which corresponds to the diameter of the dilatation pin at the distal end, said tubular guide sleeve being intrinsically stable in an empty state to maintain the existing tissue passage and being separable over the entire length and thickness along at least one line upon insertion of the dilatation pin into the tubular guide sleeve.

13. (currently amended) A dilatation system as in claim 12 further comprising a veress canula having an outer diameter which corresponds to the ~~inner~~ inside diameter of the guide sleeve.

14. (previously presented) A dilatation system as in claim 12 wherein said guide sleeve comprises at least one longitudinally extending frangible area.

15. (previously presented) A dilatation system as in claim 14 comprising two diametrically opposite longitudinally extending frangible areas.

16. (currently amended) A dilatation system as in claim 14 wherein each said frangible area comprises one of a perforation ~~and~~ or a regionally reduced wall thickness.

17. (currently amended) A dilatation system as in claim 12 wherein said guide sleeve comprises at least two concentric sleeves, each said concentric sleeve having at least one frangible area circumferentially displaced from the frangible areas in each other concentric sleeve.

18. (previously presented) A dilatation system as in claim 12 wherein said guide sleeve has a proximal end formed with a holding element.

19. (previously presented) A dilatation system as in claim 12 wherein said guide sleeve has a distal end which is tapered.

20. (previously presented) A dilatation system as in claim 12 wherein said guide sleeve is manufactured of transparent plastic.

21. (previously presented) A dilatation system as in claim 12 wherein said dilatation pin comprises a cutter for separating the guide sleeve as the dilatation pin is inserted into the guide sleeve.

22. (currently amended) A tubular guide sleeve for a dilatation system for dilating an existing tissue passage in a body, the system being of the type comprising a dilatation pin having a distal end and a diameter which increases proximally from said distal end;

said tubular guide sleeve having a length, a thickness and an inside diameter which corresponds to the diameter of the dilatation pin at the distal end, said tubular guide sleeve being intrinsically stable in an empty state to maintain the existing tissue passage and being separable over the entire length and thickness along at least one line upon insertion of the dilatation pin.